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For Immediate Release

Judicial Nominating Commission releases names of nominees to fill vacant District Court judgeship in Warren County

FRANKFORT, Ky., March 4, 2005 — The Judicial Nominating Commission, led by Chief Justice Joseph E. Lambert, met today at the Warren County Justice Center in Bowling Green to choose nominees to replace Judge JoAnn Spinks Coleman. Judge Coleman's retirement, effective Feb. 1, 2005, created a vacant judgeship for the 8th Judicial District, which consists of Warren County. Three attorneys were named as nominees to fill this vacancy: **Joy D. Denton, Catherine Rice Gaither Holderfield and Stephen Chase Todd.**

Joy D. Denton

Denton resides and practices in Bowling Green where she is associated with Harned, Bachert & Denton, LLP. Family law comprises more than 75 percent of her law practice. She graduated from the University of Kentucky with both a law degree and a bachelor's degree.

Catherine Rice Gaither Holderfield

Holderfield graduated with a law degree from the University of Kentucky College of Law and from Murray State University with a bachelor's degree in business administration. She currently serves as a special domestic relations commissioner and special master commissioner for the 38th Judicial Circuit, which consists of Butler, Edmonson, Hancock and Ohio counties. Her practice involves primarily domestic relations and family law cases. Holderfield resides in Bowling Green.

Stephen Chase Todd

Todd lives in Bowling Green and serves as domestic relations commissioner for the 49th Judicial Circuit, which consists of Allen and Simpson counties. In addition, he has an extensive criminal defense practice in Warren, Allen and Simpson counties. He holds a law degree from the University of Kentucky College of Law, a master's degree from Vanderbilt University and a bachelor's degree from Western Kentucky University.

Judicial Nominating Process

When a judicial vacancy occurs, the executive secretary of the Judicial Nominating Commission publishes a notice of vacancy in the judicial circuit or the judicial district affected. Attorneys can recommend someone or nominate themselves. The names of the applicants are not released. Once nominations occur, the individuals interested in the position return a questionnaire to the Office

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of Chief Justice. Chief Justice Lambert then meets with the Judicial Nominating Commission to choose three nominees. Because the Kentucky Constitution requires that three names be submitted to the governor, in some cases the commission submits an attorney's name even though the attorney did not apply. A letter naming the three nominees is sent to Gov. Ernie Fletcher for review. When the governor appoints a replacement, his office makes the announcement.

District Court

District Court is a court of limited jurisdiction which hears civil cases involving \$4,000 or less, juvenile matters, city and county ordinances, misdemeanors, cases relating to domestic violence and abuse, guardianships for disabled people, traffic offenses, probate of wills and felony preliminary hearings. The Small Claims Division is part of District Court's jurisdiction and informally handles matters with a value of \$1,500 or less. The Administrative Office of the Courts in Frankfort supports the activities of more than 3,400 Kentucky Court of Justice employees, including the elected offices of justices, judges and circuit court clerks.

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